REMARKS

A Final Office Action mailed February 11, 2004 has been received and carefully reviewed. Claims 1-37 are pending in the application. Claims 1-37 were rejected.

On page 3 of the Office Action, claims 1-37 were rejected under § 102(e) as being anticipated by Debes et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,970,223).

Applicants respectfully traverse the section 102(e) rejection of claims 1-37. To establish a *prima facie* case for rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102, all the claim limitations must be taught, disclosed or suggested by the cited reference. Applicants respectfully submit that Debes et al. do not teach, disclos or suggests all the claim limitations of Applicants' application.

Applicants' invention requires at least "assigning priority values to data channels that receive print jobs." Because priority is based on which data channel received the print job, it doesn't matter what type of print job has been sent through the data channel. Priority is the same for any type of print job that is sent through a particular data channel, such as an Ethernet channel, because it is the data channel that is assigned the priority.

The cited Debes reference, on the other hand, is directed towards a "job interrupt system for multifunctional printing system." Debes states, "a job's priority is based on the service that created the job." The service that created the job is a particular type of service and thus a print job type is created. As will be discussed in further detail below, Debes assigns priority values to print jobs based on print job type. Debes does not assign priority values to data channels that receive print jobs. Therefore, Debes does not teach, disclose or suggest "assigning priority values to data channels that receive print jobs."

The instant application also requires at least "associating the priority value assigned to the data channel with the print jobs received at its respective data channel." According to Applicants' invention, a print job will be assigned a priority only after it is received in a data channel that receives print jobs. Thus, the print job can be any type and its priority is based upon the priority assigned to that particular data channel.

In contrast, Debes prioritizes print jobs based on "Job Type Priority: A priority assigned according to job or user type," column 12, lines 33-34. Job types in Debes are defined by their origination point, e.g., the service that produces the job, not on which

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channel the job is sent through. Once a job has been created it is assigned a priority. As the particular print job is sent through one or even a number of pathways its priority is already known and does not change. Thus, Debes does not teach, disclose or suggest "associating the priority value assigned to the data channel with the print jobs received at its respective data channel" because a priority value is already assigned to a print job before it is received in a data channel.

Applicants' invention also requires at least "printing the print jobs in an order corresponding to their associated priority values." Because Debes fails to suggest that priority is based upon a priority assigned to a particular data channel, Debes does not teach, disclose or suggest "printing the print jobs in an order corresponding to their associated priority values" as the term "associated priority values" is used in the claims and defined in the specification.

Because the Debes reference fails to teach, disclose or suggest all of the elements of Applicants' invention, the Section 102 rejection is improper. Accordingly, Applicants request that the Section 102 rejection be withdrawn.
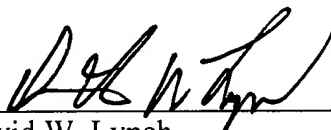
Dependent claims 2-14, 17-25, 27-28, 30-34 and 37 are also patentable over the references because they incorporate all of the limitations of the corresponding independent claims. Further, dependent claims 2-14, 17-25, 27-28, 30-34 and 37 recite additional novel elements and limitations. Applicants reserve the right to argue independently the patentability of these additional novel aspects. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that dependent claims 2-14, 17-25, 27-28, 30-34 and 37 are patentable over the cited references.

On the basis of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the claims are in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration of this application and its allowance are requested.

If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues concerning this communication, please contact Attorney for Applicants, David W. Lynch, at 651-686-6633 Ext. 116.

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By: _____
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